

years of work, is very impressive to this newer Senator. I appreciate so much what he and Senator GRASSLEY have done over the years to begin to put an end to this practice.

I think the straw that broke the camel's back—or maybe the 80 straws that broke the camel's back—was the absolute avalanche of secret holds that has confronted our new President from this Republican minority. It has come to the point where the President, I think fairly, believes his ability to staff his own administration is being compromised by people who will not stand and be counted and be accountable for the reason for their opposition. It is being done in the dark, secretly, and without any accountability. I agree that needs to be put to an end.

So I urge people who are watching this: The sixth day has begun—6 days of session. At the end, we will know who is doing this or we will be able to clear these nominees, and we will have broken this unfortunate practice, to a significant degree or we will have learned something I think very unfortunate about our friends on the other side; that is, that they have agreed to connive with one another to play a switcharoo and bring in a new Senator to dodge the clear import of the rule that the Senator from Oregon and Senator GRASSLEY worked on, on a bipartisan basis, to put into effect in this body and which was approved by an enormous majority of this body. So the clock is running and we will see. We will learn a lot about this institution and our colleagues in 6 days. I thank the Senator for his leadership on this issue.

I yield the floor, and I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

40TH ANNIVERSARY OF EARTH DAY

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I come to the floor to recognize the 40th anniversary of Earth Day and to remember the man who founded Earth Day, the late Wisconsin Governor and Senator Gaylord Nelson.

Before he was the founder of Earth Day, and one of the Nation's greatest

conservationists, he was a son of Wisconsin. He was a young boy growing up in the town of Clear Lake, WI, amid the great natural beauty of our State. When asked how he developed his lifelong interest and dedication to the environment, Nelson would say "by osmosis" while growing up in Clear Lake, WI.

He reflected the very best of our State from the beginning, building on Wisconsin's long tradition of environmental conservation. Our State passed landmark forest and waterpower conservation acts during the progressive era and lays claim not only to Gaylord Nelson but to other giants of the conservation movement such as Aldo Leopold, John Muir, and Sigurd Olson.

All of them were inspired, as Nelson was, by the beautiful Wisconsin wilderness. The natural beauty of our State charted the course of Nelson's life, from the shores of Clear Lake to the banks of the Potomac, where he changed the way we think about our planet and changed the law to protect the water we drink and the air we breathe.

There are few Members of this body, past or present, who have left such a valuable legacy. So I am proud to help celebrate that legacy with a resolution in the House and Senate celebrating the 40th anniversary of Earth Day and its founder. As we look ahead to the many challenges we face, we can draw strength from the example Gaylord set for us all. He drove tremendous change and, with Earth Day, created a new momentum that has been critical to so many efforts to protect the health of our environment.

Gaylord also understood the connection between the two great Wisconsin traditions of fiscal responsibility and conservation. Too often, a Federal program that is wasting taxpayer dollars is also laying waste to our air, our water or our public lands. The Nation's outdated mining laws are a perfect example. These laws allow the mining companies to mine on our public lands for next to nothing and leave behind an environmental mess for taxpayers to clean up.

Gaylord fought to change those laws, and when I was elected to the Senate, he asked me to take up this fight and I have. I have made it part of my Control Spending Now Act, legislation to cut the deficit by about \$½ trillion over the next 10 years. If we scrap these outdated mining laws, we can save taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars and protect the public lands that belong to the American people. They do not belong to the mining companies.

I am also working on another environmental issue that has a special connection to Gaylord Nelson; that is, clean water. The man from Clear Lake did so much for clear, clean water everywhere, including being a champion of the Clean Water Act.

Today, the Clean Water Act is under threat because two recent Supreme

Court decisions have jeopardized its protections. Those decisions put nearly 20 million acres of wetlands habitat and more than 50 percent of our stream miles in the lower 48 States at risk. These waters could now become polluted or wiped out altogether unless Congress takes action.

I am working to see that Congress stands up to the special interests that want to roll back the Clean Water Act's protections and ensure that these bodies of water can continue to provide drinking water, wildlife habitat, recreation, and support for industry and agriculture for generations of Wisconsinites to come.

So I have joined with Minnesota Representative JIM OBERSTAR to introduce the Clean Water Restoration Act. This bill is designed to accomplish one basic and important goal: ensure that the Clean Water Act of 1972 stays in place. There are no new regulations in our legislation, only a return to the original intent of the Clean Water Act, which has protected our waters for more than 35 years.

Gaylord Nelson and others have done so much to protect the health of our waters, and we owe it to them and to ourselves to carry that legacy forward. That is what I seek to do in the Senate with the Clean Water Restoration Act.

We face many other challenges as well. Of course, climate change looms largest of all. We need to address the serious problem of climate change and do so without unfairly hurting Wisconsin, which relies on coal for much of its energy needs. If we do this right, we have an opportunity to pass legislation that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and create energy jobs here in America. We can help American businesses gain a competitive advantage developing new renewable energy and energy efficient technologies.

The desire to protect our air, our water, and our planet will bring people together tomorrow, all around the world. They will talk about global issues we face and the local environmental issues in their communities that they want to address. They will organize, mobilize, and galvanize new momentum for change.

That is exactly what Gaylord Nelson intended. He knew the power of people coming together and what that could mean for the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the national parks and public lands we all cherish. He knew that these natural resources connect us all and that Earth Day would bring us together to protect them.

I am so grateful to have known Gaylord Nelson, and I am proud of the legacy he left behind. As we celebrate the 40th anniversary of Earth Day, we remember the man from Clear Lake who came to this body inspired by the beautiful Wisconsin landscape of his childhood and in the end made a better world for us all.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.